97.3,7

LETTER

TO

His Excellency Edward Salomon,

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN,

ON THE

CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

BY OTIS H. WALDO, Esq.,
OF MILWAUKEE, WIS.

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To His Excellency, Edward Salomon, Governor of the State of Wisconsin:

There are some considerations which we deem of immeasurable consequence in the prosecution of the present war for our Federal Union and Nationality, which we wish to press very urgently upon your attention, and we wish to submit to your discretion the propriety of bringing the same, with the weight of your official name, to the attention of the President of the United States. We have no personal or partizan ends to attain. We have no official position to add weight to our opinion; but are simply a citizen of a free State, happy while under the shield of the Constitution, deeply sensible of the value of the benefits we inherit, and profoundly solicitous for the safety of the Republic.

We are in no mood to speak in the language of petulant complaint. In common with the great body of our people, we cheerfully recognize the duty of every citizen in this hour of trial, to devote himself to the full extent of his strength and resources to the support of the Government. We know well that the peril is imminent—that the necessity is present—that the power of the Government must be exerted *now, at once*—if we are to be saved; that it can, in the nature of the case, be *now* exerted only through the persons who are *now* in the high places of official trust; that the only practical way to support the Government *now* is to support and strengthen the hands of those who *now* administer it; that to neglect to support them *now* is virtually to refuse to support the Nation in the moment of need and to abet treason. Yet we cannot escape the conviction that there has been, ever since the beginning of the war, a failure clearly to apprehend or rightly to appreciate the conditions indispensable to relief from our existing and constantly accumulating difficulties.

We cannot doubt that the President is as sensible as we are of the immeasurable value of the stake that is at risk in this contest; that it is not merely an empty pride or national vanity in claiming dominion from the great lakes to the gulf that is to be saved or lost; that it is not merely a question whether there shall be here two great rival Republics or only one; that our territory, though broad, is compact and bound together by so many natural bonds, by so many social ties, by common language, religion, laws, and by so many cords of commercial dependence that it cannot be peacefully severed, and the different parts of which, if separated, could not long remain at peace; that we are but one people, one country, one body; that separation is mutilation, and that, by a natural law, when mutilated, every nerve of sympathy rudely broken

will remain a source of anguish, of jealousy and of hate; that we have a form of government, mild and beneficent, which has always secured to the people in a remarkable degree the blessings both of liberty and of law; that this Government, created by the will of the whole nation, has never, for a moment, ceased to answer the high purposes of its establishment in any part of the land; that under the shield of the Constitution, and in the name of the Union, our flag has been known and respected abroad in every quarter of the earth, while at home, literally, hundreds of thousands of fair and fruitful farms, and hundreds of thousands of substantial homesteads, the abodes of plenty, of sufficient wealth and of independence affording leisure for culture and high pursuits, have been quickly created and builded by men who, under almost any other government on the earth, would have struggled vainly with poverty, and died in the condition in which they were born; that the present rebellion is causeless, and as wicked as it is causeless; that it is but a new paroxysm in the old struggle between the strong and the weak—between capital and labor—between the privileged and the mass, which involves the preservation or loss of all that the fathers achieved—not alone for us but for mankind—not alone for the present generation but for all that shall come after; that the pretended right of secession is, in the nature of the case, but a right in any one member arbitrarily to dissolve the body politic, and that that right, once established in this country, will prove to be the seed of the speedy and certain dissolution of the whole; that in that case no man could set a limit to the process of self-destruction; that an illimitable field would then be opened to the ambition of bad men in every quarter of the country; that the leaders of the present rebellion having been successful in dividing the South from the North by an arbitrary line, the door would be wide open to similar efforts of the same kind of men, whose aspirations were not gratified under the existing regime, to sow the seeds of discontent—for example, in New England and the other North-Atlantic States, where to a disappointed faction it could be plausibly urged that those States, with their age and strength and concentrated wealth—with their manufactures, their commerce, their great financial, educational and naval strength, added to their commanding position on the seaboard, at the entrance gate of the commerce of the whole country, could, with advantage to themselves, form an Atlantic Republic and levy tribute upon the growing West—that others might intrigue with the powerful communities of the Empire and Key Stone States by their concerted action to rear there a kingdom which should fix an impassable barrier between the rich fields of the North-west and the markets of New England, and compel the flow of the whole stream of Western commerce into the Bay of Manhattan and the Chesepeake; that others still would strive to break off California and Oregon, and build a separate nation on that gold-bearing coast; and yet others would conceive the idea of combining all the States and Territories of the upper and lower Mississippi in one grand central empire which should hold the balance of power and control the destinies of the continent; that no eye can see the end of this tendency to dissolution, but that we should incur the imminent hazard, or rather the certain prospect of falling and crumbling into discordant fragments till, in the place of one powerful and respected nation, we should have forty petty States or principalities with no more power to command the respect or to resist the aggressions of other nations, than those of Germany have; and that, amid the confusion that would ensue with the selfish ambitions and the strifes, struggles, and compromises of the leaders for preferment and power, the rights,

interests, independence and liberties of the people would be lost—while the world would mourn. So stupendous are the consequences which hang on this day's action!

All this the President must well know, and we do not doubt that the desire of his heart, and his constant labor, is now to achieve all that human power, with Divine aid, can achieve for America and for mankind.

But we are constrained to say, and we feel justified in asserting that the great body of the people of this State unite in saying, that the means hitherto employed are entirely inadequate to the end. We presume, after the experience of the past, the President is as fully convinced of this as we are; but conscious, as he must be, that the momentum with which the government moves must depend upon the nation moving with it, we think it of the highest importance that he should be made to fully understand the true temper of the people at this juncture.

The almost universal opinion prevails that there has been a constant failure to rightly estimate either the magnitude of the work to be done, or the preparation which is necessary to accomplish it effectually, or the thorough willingness there is with the people of the loyal states to sustain the administration, and to do all and suffer all that is necessary to be done or suffered, to preserve our liberty and nationality in the present crisis. There is certainly some foundation for the universal and terrible demand that goes up from the millions of the North, whose sons and brothers are struggling and dying on the field of battle, that now at last the administration should realize that we are *at war*, and not simply enforcing the laws; and that that war should now be waged *in such earnest* as it has not hitherto been.

Some business-like and intelligent estimate should be made of the means and measures necessary to accomplish the object. We claim that those means and measures are within our reach, and that they should be adopted and employed at once and with relentless vigor.

The rebellion is of gigantic proportions, spreading over a country and along a line of enormous extent. Partial disaster, here and there, at some points, cannot be avoided. Such is the fortune of war. To meet this, a large reserve should have been early provided. From the best information we have, we suppose the enemy has put under arms and under military drill and instruction, almost the whole body of his population capable of bearing arms. The same thing should have been done with us. *All we have is at stake*, and the war should be made the great business of the people. The entire body of the militia throughout the loyal states, should be required to give at least one day in seven to military training, to learning the duties of the soldier, and to preparation for active service in the field, and to stand as minute men at the call of the government. Thus there would be created an enormous reserve, ready to march upon any emergency. With such a reserve in Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, how quickly could a hundred thousand men have been called and thrown into Virginia, opposite Washington, when the recent crisis was approaching, and left the entire army of Virginia at liberty to fall upon the flank of the enemy when he was endeavoring to withstand the advance of our grand army on the peninsula, and where he would then have been ground between the upper and nether mill-stone, and we have been spared the series of disasters which have followed. Many occasions may yet arise, both east and west of the Alleghanies, where the necessities for such a reserve, if not provided, will be painfully felt.

There is but one rule that will meet the emergency. *We must do now as the men of the revolution did. It must be made the whole business of the people to maintain the great war for the constitution and the union.* The only test with each man who is a patriot, when he decides whether he shall go at once to bear arms in the field, must be the answer to the question whether he can *personally and presently* render more effective aid, to promote this one great business, by going there or by staying here; and every man, of whatever age, who can bear arms, must be instructed and made to stand in readiness to go to the field of actual conflict, so soon as he shall see, or the government shall determine, that he can serve more usefully there than at home.

The recent call for six hundred thousand men is received by all loyal men with acclamation, as affording proof of a new appreciation at the capital of the work that is to be done. But still *we want this grand reserve of the whole body of the militia; and if we had it now, fully enrolled and under drill, how easily and quickly could the draft be made available.*

But it is not enough to call the men. They must be used when they come. We do not complain. We are, to some extent, sensible of the complications and difficulties—far greater than those which have been met at any other period in the conduct of the government—which have surrounded the present administration from the outset. We give it our cheerful, united and *unconditional* support in the use of all the means within its reach, to the utmost extent of the resources of the nation, in waging the war to the end, *on such plan as it shall finally find wisest and most effectual.*

We are sensible also that an immense work has been accomplished, both in the valley of the Mississippi and east of the Alleghanies. But in putting forth these Herculean efforts, it is certainly wise to consider the comparative strength of the loyal and the rebel States. It is not enough to boast loosely that we are twenty millions of free white men, and that our enemy is but eight millions, and, upon the strength of that great disparity, rush on without definite computation, and without consideration of *all the facts and all the conditions of success.*

We are indeed twenty millions—men, women and children—but it would be a large estimate, and rather above the truth to presume that, out of that whole number, there are one-fifth, or four millions of effective men able either to labor or to fight. Upon these four millions there will devolve the whole labor of the war, both at home and in the field. A part of these must bear arms, a part must supply, equip and provide those who bear arms, and support the families which remain. And it is not necessary for our immediate purpose to consider just in what proportion these four millions must be divided between these two branches of service. The whole work must be done by them. The enemy has, in round numbers, twelve millions of people—eight millions white and four millions black. The eight millions white will furnish, we will presume, the same fractional part of the whole, to wit: one-fifth, or sixteen hundred thousand effective men. The four millions black will furnish a vastly greater proportion. Of them, the women and the children, as well as the men, labor daily in the field. Among them are no idlers—no gentlemen—none who pursue literature, the arts or professions. All labor—labor constantly, and labor at nothing that can be dispensed with, but at the cultivation of the ground, and at those things which are absolutely essential to the support and maintenance of the army and the people. It is estimated that, of these four millions, there are twenty-four hundred thousand

persons who labor daily and patiently at an essential part of the work of sustaining and strengthening the enemy and overturning the government. Those, with the 1,600,000 effective white men, make up their available force for the work to four millions, or the same number with our own. In numbers, then, they are our equals. What are the other facts?

The enemy fights at home, while we march there to attack him. He, with his sources of supply, is always near to his base of operations, while we transport everything—troops, arms, munitions, and mountains of supplies and stores, at great distances, at immense expense, and at enormous waste. Thence arises a prodigious drain upon our energies and resources—the sinews of war.

Again: We fight in the midst of an enemy's country, but he among friends. To him the whole country outside our lines is safe, while, as against us, every house is a castle, every tree and rock a hiding place, every grove a snare, and *every man and every woman* a spy. At every step there are tongues to tell the enemy what we are about to do, but not one to whisper to us what he intends.

We have first to take, then to hold and possess. We would not ignore the fact that we have also certain great advantages—that we have a powerful and rapidly growing navy, with experienced seamen to supply and strengthen it—that we have an open ocean, a free highway for our commerce with all nations—that we have greater wealth, with mechanical skill and preparations for manufacturing, which enable us to supply and re-supply our armies in the field better, more frequently and more promptly than the enemy can. We have also the prestige of an established government, and the support of the consciousness of a good cause. We have little doubt of being able, after deliberate preparations, to march upon and take any given point that may be held by the enemy; but can we securely hold and possess all we take upon the plan on which we have hitherto conducted the war? If not, then upon what plan can we do it?

We marched a great and splendidly appointed army of more than 200,000 men across the Ohio and down the Mississippi, and, after incalculable labor and suffering, took Forts Henry and Donaldson, Bowling Green, Corinth, Columbus, Island No. 10, and Memphis. With those points in our possession, and the army of the enemy having retreated Southward, in a military sense, we had taken Western Kentucky and Tennessee. That was truly a brilliant achievment, and yet the territory so taken, as seen on the map, is but a small spot compared with the whole country which is in open revolt. But, in order to hold and possess even this small territory, this splendid army, which fought at Shiloh and won the series of victories which has rendered it illustrious, has to be divided and scattered in small bodies—at Paducah, at Bowling Green, at Fort Henry, at Fort Donaldson, at Clarksville, at Nashville, at Shiloh, at Florence, at Huntsville, at Columbus, at Island No. 10, at Memphis, and at we do not know how many other places—while a tired remnant drags itself slowly away towards East Tennessee, under Buel. Immediately it becomes evident not only that this monster army is exhausted and has no strength to make further aggressive war, but that each parcel or company of those brave men are in danger daily of being betrayed, set upon and destroyed by a superior force, raised, informed and voluntarily fed and supported by the hostile and treacherous people of the country, whose persons, property and estates are carefully guarded and preserved by our armed men, who are stationed there in very mockery of making war. At this very moment, when our whole army

has been virtually employed since April in protecting the enemy in the employment of his whole laboring population in raising this year's crop to sustain his next campaign, we hear that he is just in the act of advancing again in superior force, to reap the harvest and to recover the ground he has lost. It is evident that another great army must now be raised or we cannot again make aggressive war, if indeed we can hold our present position. We are glad it is to be raised. But how many such great armies can we raise, and how many will it be necessary to raise, taking the history of the war in the West or in the East for our instruction, before we shall be prepared, on the present plan, not only to take but to hold and possess the whole area of the revolted States? *Two millions of men could hardly do it. It is worthy of inquiry whether there are loyal men enough in the North for that work?*

Is, then, the quelling of the rebellion beyond our power? By no means. What, then, shall be done? If we were to offer advice we would repeat each morning, *we are at war*—actual, great and terrible *war*. The very leading object in war is, not to enforce the civil laws and to preserve the civil rights of the enemy, but, to break and weaken the enemy by all means, and deprive him of the power to do us harm. For that purpose, we do not hesitate to invade his territory, and to take his life. After that, to stumble on imaginary points as to his legal or constitutional rights of property we think puerile.—Our enemy is powerful and desperately in earnest. If we would ever overcome him, we must not only fight his armies in pitched battles but deprive him of his resources, divide and distract his people, drive him out and occupy his country, supply our men from his stores, and impose upon him every possible burthen and incumbrance.

It is obviously, for the reasons above given, of great if not indispensable consequence in the present war to divide the enemy. To do this we must obviously divide either the white men or the black men, or both: Whereas, up to this time, we have pursued the most persistent and effectual course to unite them both and consolidate the power of our adversary.

At the beginning of the war much was said of suppressed Union sentiment at the South; and when our armies first advanced into the enemy's country, that sentiment found frequent expression from the people at the sight of the national flag. There is little doubt that in the beginning the great majority and the most intelligent and substantial of their people deprecated and deplorde the madness of the hour. But all that is passed. We hear no more of the Union sentiment there. *The conduct of the war has been such as to discourage and silence all loyal sentiments and opinions in that part of the country which has been the theatre of active operations.* Nowhere in that part of the country, nor indeed in any part, has the government shown that hatred to treason which the enemy everywhere shows to loyalty. Nowhere has it been made nor has there been any attempt to make it as dangerous to be a traitor or an abettor of treason, as the enemy has constantly made it to be a loyal man. Everywhere, where the enemy is present, he clears the country of all those whose sympathies are not with the rebellion. In many districts, all Union men able to bear arms are either driven into the ranks or destroyed; and all other persons whomsoever, whether men, women or children, to whom attaches the slightest suspicion of cherishing a remaining affection for the old flag, are driven out of the country, their houses despoiled and their property confiscated to the use of the enemy. What unarmed man, alone on his farm, in the valley of the Shenandoah, with his wife and children and domestic servants

around him, can be expected to express Union sentiments or to give aid or information to Union armies, so long as he sees his rebel neighbor, whose sons and brothers are under arms with the enemy, perfectly safe under all the vicissitudes of war and protected in his person, his family, his estate and even in the labor of his slaves, whichever army happens to occupy the neighborhood, and at the same time sees the home of his Union brother despoiled, *his* family driven out in poverty and himself forced to take up arms as a common soldier, but too happy to save his life!

It is not to be concealed that the successes thus far achieved, are not commensurate with the immense preparations made. The people are not behind in their part of the work. The millions of the north, and of the middle and border states, have risen with an unanimity and energy of patriotism which is beyond all precedent. They have poured out their treasure and their blood, literally, like water. At the bare call of the government, a great army of six hundred thousand men, more splendid and powerful in all respects, except it be in its leaders, than any other which has marched in any cause, in the present century, has voluntarily come forth ready to die for victory. Yet they have not prevailed. Now six hundred thousand more go forth with the same spirit of devotion. Shall they also fail? We fear they will, unless they shall be employed far more wisely and far more energetically than heretofore. Then, with our calamities, there will certainly come a terrible reckoning with those loyal millions, whose sons have been sacrificed by hundreds of thousands, by any who shall have participated in allowing the imbecility, the incompetency, the ambitions, the jealousies, the enmities or the cool or doubtful loyalty of individuals, to stand between these armies and victory—this people and freedom.

The war must be waged in earnest, and with *actual hostility and intent to injure, and, if need be, to destroy the enemy.* We must make thorough work.

Nothing whatever must be allowed to interfere with this—not even the strong ties of affection which bind us to our deluded but criminal brothers and kindred. And if there be either men in council or leaders in the field who, though not traitors yet are only coolly loyal, who, while they struggle to perform their duties to the government—do so painfully and reluctantly—who find the keen edge of their hatred to treason softened by their affection for the traitors—who, with all their faithful resolutions, find themselves by their affection for the persons, the opinions or the interests of the rebels so unnerved and enfeebled in their efforts to overcome the rebellion as to unfit them to strike, to strike with all their might—to strike with the same passionate, desperate, relentless energy to destroy the enemy and his cause, and the foundation and support of it with which he strikes to destroy the government, they should be made at once to stand aside and make room for fitter even though not abler men.

The military leader who is furnished with the men and means adequate to the task must succeed, or must make way for another who can. The cause is everything and individuals nothing. No man should be allowed to retain a command whose conduct in the field, with all the means of success at hand, has for any considerable length of time been attended with defeat and disaster.

Again, it must be borne in mind that this is not the case of a foreign war. We are not marching armies into a foreign country, and among a population which owes allegiance to a foreign prince; but a war entirely within our own country, where all the people owe allegiance to our government. On the other

hand, this is not the case of a mere insurrection or local rising of a number of persons within a State against the existing government which remains undisturbed in its authority, and where each individual is left at liberty to avoid complicity with the schemes of the rebels, and to claim and receive the protection of his lawful government. This *is* the case of a revolt by whole provinces or States. Here the traitors have actually seized and, for the time being, effectually hold the reins of local government. Here the power of the lawful government is suspended and the citizen, for the present, has no choice but to acquiesce in the state of things that exists, and to submit to the government *de facto* which, although usurped, is the only government which has any power to protect him in any act or in any right. But when the lawful government again appears and extends its protection over him by the military power, the duty of the citizen revives to yield to its authority and contribute to its support. Then the citizen can no longer hesitate to submit to the rightful authority. Then, if he longer persists in his opposition, he abets treason and forfeits all right to protection which is the reward due to loyalty alone, and then, if, in the opinion of the military commander on the spot, the necessity arises, he cannot complain if he is driven outside the lines and his civil rights disregarded, to ensure the safety of the State. We think this necessity has arisen in many districts where the Union armies are present.

Everywhere, where our armies advance into the enemy's country, the rebel population may properly be driven before and outside the lines, their substance consumed in the support of our army, their slaves absolutely withdrawn from their service, and either protected in the fruits of their own labor upon the plantations where they are, or made to relieve our soldiers from a part of their laborious duties.

In this course there is no hardship to the resident population to be affected by it, since they are all citizens, whose first duty is loyalty to the government, and, by simply yielding to the demand of that duty, they will not only remain in quiet, but will be protected in their homes and in their rights by the whole power of the government. On the other hand, thus much is due to the loyal men who are not suffered to enjoy their rights and cannot even live there in safety, while the rebel population is permitted to remain to spy upon and betray them.

Consider, from one example, what advantages might follow from such a policy—always keeping in mind that the primary object in war is to divide and weaken the enemy, to deprive him of his resources and to impose upon him all the burdens and incumbrances we can. Nothing could have been easier for General Butler, with but a slightly increased force, if he had had instruction to do so, when he first took military possession of New Orleans, and virtually of all Louisiana, than to have driven out of that State the great bulk of its rebel population, *except such as he should think it wise to place in the ranks to fill his broken companies or to hold as prisoners and criminals.*—The fathers and brothers of these people are now in arms against us, and they themselves are laboring every way to sustain the cause of the rebellion. Louisiana is a very rich planting State, with a population of half a million whites and a somewhat less number of blacks. By that one blow which an army of 50,000, could easily complete in 90 days, at least four very important things would be accomplished:

1st. All the products of the rich plantations of that whole State, and all the labor of at least three hundred thousand blacks would at once be taken entirely and effectually from the aid and support of the enemy.

2d. At least three hundred thousand white persons, if so many should persist in their disloyalty, would be imposed upon their brother rebels for support, and the Mississippi River placed as an effectual barrier against their return, so long as we choose to prevent it by a small force.

3d. A superintendent could be detailed to each parish to look generally after the habits and labor of the Negroes, with power to promise them the enjoyment of the crops they should raise, and further, upon condition that they should prove to be loyal, faithful, industrious and thrifty, to guarantee their perpetual freedom. Thus would be tried, upon a cheap, practicable and grand scale, an experiment to show whether the black man will labor to sustain himself, under the strong motives of duty and self-interest, without the control of a master. And

4th. There would be at least so much of country (equal in area to Western Kentucky and Tennessee,) so completely wrested from rebel control as to remain at peace without the distribution over it of a hundred thousand Union soldiers, and so leave the body of the army to advance to new conquests. Let that course be pursued by the great army which we are about to have in the field, with one State after another, and how quickly can the enemy be cut off from such indispensable sources of supply, and burdened with the care and sustenance of such a vast multitude, whom his fighting men now leave at home to be protected by us and supported by the slaves, that he will be obliged to capitulate without terms, and surrender his leaders to be disposed of at the discretion of the government, unless they shall sooner escape.

We believe it is only by such or a similar course that the white men of the revolted States can be effectually divided. It is only by giving to its loyal supporters the same protection, and awarding to its enemies the same measure of punishment, that the usurped government of the Confederate States affords and awards to its friends and enemies, that the Federal government can hope to cultivate a loyal spirit in its citizens there. *Loyalty is the fruit alone of protection to the citizen.*

But more than this, *the government needs, in this emergency, the aid of all loyal men, of whatever race or color.* We duly appreciate the motives of prudence and moderation, which actuated the administration at the beginning of the war—their desire if possible to prevail upon deluded men to return to their allegiance and to the enjoyment of their constitutional privileges on second thought, before they should be overwhelmed by the exercise of the whole crushing power of the government. We fully recognize the truth that military law has no force beyond the region which is under actual military sway. But now fifteen months have passed since the war broke out, and it is evident that the return of this deluded people to their allegiance and duty is not promoted by gentleness in the conduct of the war, by lenity in dealing with traitors, or by a feeble show of magnanimity in the preservation and care of their persons and estates when they come into our power; that in the present attitude of affairs, our forbearance and moderation are mistaken for weakness and irresolution; that in the nature of the case, neither trust nor obedience will ever return to those people till they shall see both the power and the disposition on the part of the government to punish its enemies and protect its friends; and that whatever their duty or their unrestrained choice might be, it is idle to expect the body of the people in the revolted States, surrounded by dangers and agitated by alarms, to return to a hearty and open support of the Union, till, in all those States, it shall be the fixed and declared

policy of the government to render it as dangerous to be a traitor as our enemies have made it to be a loyal citizen.

On the other hand, we understand it to be one of the best established rights of a belligerent in war, *to take advantage of and derive aid from the dissensions, internal grievances and dissatisfactions which exist in the enemy's country.* We deem it now not only the right but the imperative duty of the government, in all those places which are or shall be actually occupied, controlled and possessed by our military force, where we have the power to protect as well as to proclaim and employ, to call to its aid (in all ways in which it shall be found that they can aid us with effect) the loyal black men of the revolted States; to systematically organize and train them; to withdraw them absolutely from giving support to the enemy; to employ them in supplying the wants, and in relieving the toil of our men; and (so fast as they can be taught the duties of the soldier, and, as in the opinion of the generals commanding on the spot, they can be made useful as soldiers,) to arm them for our aid and for their own defence; and that to all those who shall thus loyally and faithfully make common cause with us, it should pledge the national faith to their *perpetual freedom.*

The war was not indeed undertaken, and is not prosecuted by us primarily, either to sustain or to destroy slavery: but the conviction is growing and is already controling, with our people, that slavery is the foundation and the heart and soul of the rebellion: that, without slavery, the rebellion would never have commenced: that, without slavery, the rebellion could not hold out a month: that, with slavery remaining, with the interests and fierce passions which are now enlisted in its support, there is danger that a peace declared today would be delusive and temporary. If we cannot otherwise speedily end the war—and we think we cannot—we must end slavery. If we cannot otherwise speedily establish peace after the war—and we greatly fear we cannot—we must end slavery.

We by no means presume to dictate a policy. We only express our opinions. Yet, in view of the great interests of our country and of humanity which are at stake in the present contest, and of the fearful cost at which these interest must be preserved at the best, we implore them to consider these things—now, at once, to consider whether other thousands of true and loyal men shall be sent down to die by the sword and by disease on an enemy's ground, while we refuse to weaken or encumber that enemy, or to destroy his resources where we can, or to avail ourselves of the aid of a mighty host of willing men, who know the country and the people, and have wrongs of their own to redress, and who are ready to render us such aid as they can, whether in the trench or in the field.

We did not commence this war, nor did we enter upon it to curtail the rights of any. We were willing to keep all the guarantees of the Constitution. We have kept them. But we know that the root of the tree of slavery is the source of all our troubles and of all our perils. "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." Our enemy rejects, tramples upon and despises the Constitution, and seeks to destroy both it and us. We say now *let the axe be laid at the root of the tree, and let the tree itself fall and perish with all its bitter fruit.*

We by no means advocate the stirring up of insurrection among a servile population, or any plan of either indiscriminate slaughter or of unnecessary cruelty to our enemies. But all that the fathers achieved, all that we possess,

all that our children are to inherit, all the blessings that mankind are to derive from our example of freedom, tremble now in the scale.

We are at war. The time for conciliation is past. There now remains only a bare and terrible trial of strength. Let the nation bend itself with all its might to the work. The greatest rigor is now the greatest mercy. While our sons and brothers, the flower of our youth, go down, a priceless sacrifice upon the field of blood, let *thorough*, THOROUGH, THOROUGH, be inscribed on our banners. Then, with God's help, we shall prevail.

Very Respectfully,

Milwaukee, August 9th, 1862. O. H. WALDO.

P. S. I take the liberty to add this note: The foregoing letter was written, as its tenor and date import, several weeks since. Important events have since occurred, which, so far from weakening, greatly stengthen and emphasize the considerations therein presented, to-wit:

1st. That the work is so great that it must enlist all our energies.

2d. That the enemy must be divided, and that to that end the conduct of the war must be more vigorous and relentless—must cause all men in the revolted states, as our armies advance, to feel that their *only way of safety* is in supporting the government. Now they are misled, deluded and filled with the terrific conviction that we intend their subjugation and dishonor. They must return first by compulsion and dire necessity. Then, as they return to reason and to a knowledge of the total and fearful error into which they have been hurried by reckless leaders, they will gradually return also to duty to, trust in and affection for, the legitimate government.

3d. That it is of the very first importance, as we advance, to cut off the insurgents from their great van of support in the labor of the colored race, and so cause them to see the *hopeless* and *terrible* position into which they are hurrying. The recent events in Northern Virginia and Maryland certainly show emphatically what sufferings and losses we may be subjected to while we so carry on the war as to render it safe for the whole mass of able bodied men in the revolted States to leave their homes and concentrate at our extreme point.

O. H. WALDO.

Sept. 15th, 1862.